Aboriginal Relations

BUSINESS PLAN 2009-12

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The business plan for the three years commencing April 1, 2009 was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Government Accountability Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as of March 12, 2009 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in preparing the business plan.

The Ministry's priorities outlined in the business plan were developed in the context of the government's business and fiscal plans. I am committed to achieving the planned results laid out in this business plan.

Gene Zwozdesky, *Minister of Aboriginal Relations*
March 19, 2009

THE MINISTRY

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations consists of the Department of Aboriginal Relations, which is structured according to the following divisions: First Nations and Métis Relations, Consultation and Land Claims, and Policy and Planning. Although not separate entities for reporting purposes, the Ministry supports two important institutions which are accountable to the Minister: The Métis Settlements Appeal Tribunal, a quasi-judicial body established by the *Métis Settlements Act*, which works to resolve disputes pertaining to land, membership and surface rights; and the Métis Settlements Ombudsman's Office, which investigates complaints regarding the administration of Settlement affairs.

VISION

Strong and vibrant Aboriginal communities and people, fully participating in the opportunities of a prosperous and diverse Alberta.

MISSION

Oversee the development and alignment of Government of Alberta legislation, policies and initiatives that affect Aboriginal people and their rights, by building effective relationships with Aboriginal communities, industry and governments.

LINK TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

The Ministry supports goal nine of the *Government of Alberta Strategic Business Plan – Alberta will have strong and effective municipalities and self-reliant Aboriginal communities.* This goal is supported through consultation with Aboriginal people, and governance and socio-economic development initiatives.

Government of Alberta Priority

Aboriginal Relations works on the government priority to *promote strong and vibrant communities.*

SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- There is a growing awareness of the importance of reconciling the rights of Aboriginal people with the interests of all Albertans, requiring the development of strong relationships. The *Protocol Agreement on Government to Government Relations* with First Nations Grand Chiefs and Vice-Chiefs supports these relationships and provides new opportunities to engage Aboriginal people in Alberta's determination of our energy, environmental, land use and socio-economic future.
- The conclusion of a new long-term governance and funding arrangement with the Métis Settlements will provide direction for achieving the goals of effective governance, enhanced accountability and long-term sustainability, building on the progress that has been made since the modern legislative framework was established in 1990.
- Reviews of Aboriginal policies, programs and services present opportunities to further strengthen Aboriginal relationships and increase the effectiveness of initiatives. Both the *Consultation Policy on Land Management and Resource Development* and the *Aboriginal Policy Framework* are scheduled for review during the business planning horizon.
- The *Alberta/Métis Nation of Alberta Association Framework Agreement* provides an opportunity for measurable progress toward Métis economic development and well-being. Under the agreement, the development of annual three-year strategic business plans by the Métis Nation of Alberta Association will identify strategies to achieve these goals.
- Provincial economic growth is expected to moderate; however, opportunities for employment for Aboriginal people will arise from measures to stimulate the global economy, as well as from innovative and successful approaches undertaken by Aboriginal communities to meet their needs.
- The Aboriginal population is growing at a faster rate than that of the total Alberta population and is becoming increasingly urban. While many Aboriginal Albertans are thriving, Aboriginal people, on average, continue to be over-represented in the child welfare and justice systems and experience lower levels of education and employment.
- Training programs have achieved significant outcomes for Aboriginal workers, especially in the trades. And, as Alberta shifts towards a more knowledge-based economy, greater emphasis on higher levels of education will be needed to take advantage of opportunities. The *First Nation, Métis and Inuit Workforce Planning Initiative* will develop collaborative action plans with innovative approaches to workforce participation in partnership with Aboriginal communities in Alberta.

- The capacity of Aboriginal communities to adequately engage government and industry regarding land management has not kept pace with resource development activity. In addition, stakeholders involved with Aboriginal consultation have differing views of Aboriginal consultation requirements.
- With the evolving legal landscape, Alberta's approach to consultation needs to be better coordinated and reviewed on a regular basis. Increased resource development on provincial Crown land has also highlighted the need to pay greater attention to rights and traditional uses and to the environmental impact on provincial Crown land.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2009-12

Through the Minister's mandate letter and the Ministry's review of external factors, the strategic priorities described below have been identified. These priorities are in addition to the important ongoing core activities of the Ministry which are consistent with the overall direction provided by *Strengthening Relationships: The Government of Alberta's Aboriginal Policy Framework*.

BUILDING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

1.	**Métis settlements** **Linkage: Goals 1 and 2**	Conclude a new long-term governance and funding arrangement with and for the Métis Settlements that is focused on effective governance, enhanced accountability and sustainability.
2.	**Strong communities** **Linkage: Goal 1**	Provide support to the Safe Communities Secretariat in implementing the recommendations of the Crime Reduction and Safe Communities Task Force that affect Aboriginal people.
3.	**Consultation** **Linkage: Goal 2**	Review *Alberta's First Nation Consultation Policy on Land Management and Resource Development* to increase the effectiveness of the consultation processes.
4.	**Aboriginal policies and programs** **Linkage: Goal 1**	Review the *Aboriginal Policy Framework* and Government of Alberta programs and services for Aboriginals to enhance their effectiveness in increasing self-reliance and well-being of Aboriginal communities.
5.	**First Nations relationships** **Linkage: Goal 1**	Continue to establish and maintain effective relationships between the Government of Alberta and First Nations through the *Protocol Agreement on Government to Government Relations* to support First Nation economic, social and community development.
6.	**Aboriginal economic participation** **Linkage: Goals 1 and 2**	Coordinate discussions and initiatives with First Nations, Métis and Inuit and related Aboriginal organizations, industry, Alberta ministries and, where appropriate, the federal government to improve overall socio-economic outcomes for Aboriginal people, particularly through increased levels of education.

CORE BUSINESSES, GOALS, STRATEGIES & PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Core Business: Aboriginal relationships, legislation and initiatives

GOAL ONE 1

Support economic and social development of Aboriginal communities and people

What it means

The Ministry implements initiatives to develop strategic economic partnerships between Aboriginal communities, industry and educational institutions; provides advice and specialized knowledge to provincial and federal departments, municipal governments and industry; and leads or participates in cross-ministry strategies affecting Aboriginal people. These activities serve to establish effective relationships, legislation, policies and initiatives that contribute to strong and vibrant Aboriginal communities and people.

Strategies

1.1 Work with the Métis Settlements General Council to conclude a long-term governance and funding arrangement that is focused on effective governance, enhanced accountability and sustainability, including proposals for legislative amendments.

1.2 Review the *Aboriginal Policy Framework* and Government of Alberta Aboriginal programs and services to enhance their effectiveness in increasing self-reliance and well-being of Aboriginal communities.

1.3 Lead Alberta's implementation of the *Protocol Agreement on Government to Government Relations.*

1.4 Support the development of strategic partnerships among educational institutions, Aboriginal groups, industry and governments to enhance Aboriginal educational attainment and participation in the economy.

1.5 Organize a symposium to increase awareness and share Aboriginal economic development practices.

1.6 Support inclusion of the needs of Aboriginal governments and organizations in the development and implementation of provincial social policies and initiatives, especially for Aboriginal women, children and youth, including the government's plan to ensure strong and vibrant communities.

1.7 Co-lead, with Employment and Immigration, an engagement process with First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders, communities and organizations to develop collaborative community action plans to increase Aboriginal workforce participation.

1.8 Lead the participation of Alberta ministries in discussions with First Nations and the federal government on self-governance.

1.9 Work with Alberta ministries, federal and municipal governments, friendship centres and other Aboriginal organizations to support urban Aboriginal initiatives.

1.10 Through the *Alberta/Métis Nation of Alberta Association Framework Agreement* work with the Métis Nation of Alberta Association and other ministries to progress toward its goals of economic development and Métis well-being, including the development of criteria to measure progress.

1.11 Support economic, social and community development projects through the First Nations Development Fund and the Community Development Trust Fund.

1.12 Work with the federal government, other provinces, territories, and Aboriginal governments and organizations, to develop regional strategies to address Aboriginal issues.

Performance Measure	Last Actual 2007-08	Target 2009-10	Target 2010-11	Target 2011-12
1.a **Economic Partnerships:** Number of First Nations negotiating strategic economic partnerships with industry and other organizations	16	20	22	24

GOAL TWO 2

Ensure Alberta meets constitutional and legal obligations regarding Aboriginal consultation

What it means

The Ministry has an important role to ensure that the province's constitutional and legal obligations regarding Aboriginal people are understood and respected, including the settlement of treaty land entitlement claims and the duty to consult whenever constitutional rights may be affected. The review and implementation of applicable legislation, the refinement of consultation policy guidelines and continued support for the development of traditional use studies help to meet the government's responsibilities. These initiatives also contribute to economic growth and participation in the provincial economy.

Strategies

2.1 Review *Alberta's First Nation Consultation Policy on Land Management and Resource Development* to increase the effectiveness of consultation processes.

2.2 Continue to improve coordination of Alberta ministries in meeting the province's obligation to consult whenever constitutional rights may be affected.

2.3 Work with First Nations on the development of traditional use data and protocols used for land management and resource development consultations.

2.4 Work with Alberta ministries, the federal government and First Nations toward timely resolution of land-related negotiations, including treaty land entitlement claims for which Alberta has an obligation under the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement.

2.5 Continue coordinating Alberta's participation in discussions with First Nations and the federal government regarding the removal of barriers to economic activity on First Nations reserves pursuant to federal legislation.

2.6 Work with other governments and ministries, industry and Aboriginal communities and organizations to explore mechanisms to increase certainty for all parties in the oil sands regions.

2.7 Initiate a trilateral process involving First Nations, government and industry to provide advice on key consultation issues.

Performance Measures	Last Actual 2007-08	Target 2009-10	Target 2010-11	Target 2011-12
2.a **Land Claims and Related Agreements:** Progress on the negotiation and implementation of land claims and related agreements.[1]				
• Number of final agreements	5	5	4	3
• Number of fully implemented agreements	12	15	16	17
2.b **Contacts for Consultation:** Number of First Nations with a single point of contact for consultation[2]	42	42	43	44

Notes:

1 The Ministry coordinates Alberta's participation in the negotiation of land claims and related agreements between the Government of Canada and First Nations and ensures that the obligations of the province are fulfilled. The figures for performance measure 2.a indicate the status of the negotiations at the end of the fiscal year. For example, if a final agreement is fully implemented during the year, it is counted as a fully implemented agreement and no longer counted as a final agreement.

2 There are 47 First Nations in Alberta.

EXPENSE BY CORE BUSINESS
(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable					
	2007-08 Actual	2008-09 Budget	2008-09 Forecast	2009-10 Estimate	2010-11 Target	2011-12 Target
Aboriginal relationships, legislation and initiatives	94,945	117,429	150,679	149,941	154,656	151,456
MINISTRY EXPENSE	94,945	117,429	150,679	149,941	154,656	151,456

MINISTRY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable					
	2007-08 Actual	2008-09 Budget	2008-09 Forecast	2009-10 Estimate	2010-11 Target	2011-12 Target
REVENUE						
Internal Government Transfers	56,121	78,200	110,200	110,200	115,200	120,200
Other Revenue	218	-	97	-	-	-
MINISTRY REVENUE	56,339	78,200	110,297	110,200	115,200	120,200
EXPENSE						
Program						
Ministry Support Services	2,315	3,366	3,344	3,661	3,863	3,863
First Nations and Métis Relations	21,337	19,976	21,226	21,724	20,878	14,378
Métis Settlements Appeal Tribunal	953	1,075	1,075	1,092	1,119	1,119
First Nations Development Fund	55,921	78,000	110,000	110,000	115,000	120,000
Consultation and Land Claims	12,915	13,837	13,837	12,114	12,291	10,591
Policy and Planning	1,296	1,175	1,197	1,350	1,505	1,505
Land and Legal Settlements	60	-	-	-	-	-
Valuation Adjustments and Other Provisions	148	-	-	-	-	-
MINISTRY EXPENSE	94,945	117,429	150,679	149,941	154,656	151,456
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
NET OPERATING RESULT	(38,606)	(39,229)	(40,382)	(39,741)	(39,456)	(31,256)

CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT
(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable					
	2007-08 Actual	2008-09 Budget	2008-09 Forecast	2009-10 Estimate	2010-11 Target	2011-12 Target
Ministry Revenue	56,339	78,200	110,297	110,200	115,200	120,200
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(56,121)	(78,200)	(110,200)	(110,200)	(115,200)	(120,200)
Consolidated Revenue	218	-	97	-	-	-
Ministry Expense	94,945	117,429	150,679	149,941	154,656	151,456
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Expense	**94,945**	**117,429**	**150,679**	**149,941**	**154,656**	**151,456**
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT	(94,727)	(117,429)	(150,582)	(149,941)	(154,656)	(151,456)